

March 23, 2020

**Coronavirus (COVID-19) Frequently Asked Questions
ALL DHS PROVIDERS**

Q1 We are concerned that delayed turn-around in background check processing will make it harder for us to hire new staff, in the case of workforce shortages. Will DHS waive background check requirements?

Background checks are an important practice to help assure the safety of vulnerable populations.

The Background Check staff employed by DHS remain fully operational during this time of disruption. They will continue to process requests for background checks in as timely a manner as is possible. We continue to expect ND-only background checks (criminal, and child abuse and neglect) to be complete within 7-10 days of receiving a completed application. The team will push to process requests even more quickly if they can.

If a background check requires fingerprints, the applicant needs to physically go to a location that conducts fingerprint scans. In some communities, law enforcement serves this role, in others it is ND Human Service Center staff, and in others the work is done by a private contractor.

There are protocols in place that both applicant and staff will be advised to follow to promote safe practices during the COVID-19 pandemic. If an applicant runs into a challenge finding a fingerprinting location, please contact Tara with **CBCU's** at **701-328-1846** to discuss alternatives or take a look at the Q&A on the DHS website specific to background check processes.

At this time there is no plan to approve a broad waiver or curtailment of background check requirements.

Q2 Will DHS continue to process and issue payment for contracted service during the pandemic?

Yes. DHS is fully operational and will continue to ensure that payments are processed according to normal practice. Any deviation from normal practice will be communicated with providers.

DHS has been working with providers to encourage a move to online submission of billings. This practice will be more important than ever during this period of time as DHS is very likely to experience worksite disruptions that will delay our ability to efficiently process paper billings.

Please visit the DHS Provider Resource page for a series of links that can help you find the information you need to get enrolled in online systems as this will help expedite timely payment.

Q3 Are there any travel precautions we should take or restricted forms of travel?

Please follow all CDC guidelines regarding travel. Also, continue to review the ND Department of Health and Department of Human Services websites for ND-specific information.

As a general practice, DHS is encouraging providers to limit non-client-service-necessitated travel and replace in-person interactions with virtual interactions (audio or video) whenever possible.

Also be mindful of CDC-recommended precautions for people who have recently traveled. Your organization will undoubtedly have its own policies on this matter. DHS is following CDC-recommendations regarding required remote work post-out-of-country travel.